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(2) & (3) Surplus officers were retired to the extent necessary, and there still remained nine officers who had completed twenty-five years' qualifying service whom it was not found necessary to discharge immediately. Of these, two were Europeans, four Brahmans and three non-Brahmans. Of the first and last class, one in each has since retired.

(4) Yes.

Mr. ABBAS ALI KHAN :—" May I enquire, Sir, whether the Indian Christians are classified as members of the non-Brahman party ? "

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" The hon. Member must know that for himself. He is an Advocate of experience."

Mr. ABBAS ALI KHAN :—" I have no doubt about it, Sir, but I find that whereas the only Indian Christian in the service was compulsorily retired, the three non-Brahmans were retained ? "

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" The information with regard to that particular officer will not be to his credit, nor to his advantage in the matter of pension, if the full information is disclosed."

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—" The hon. the Minister said that if certain information is to be disclosed, it would not be to the advantage of the individual officer concerned. Is it communal factor, or personal, Sir ? "

(No answer.)

Reforms (Council Secretaries).

Council Secretaries.

283 *Q.*—Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTIYAR : Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Council Secretaries appointed during the first Legislative Council under section 52 (4) of the Government of India Act still continue as Council Secretaries having regard to the provision of sub-section (4) of that section ;

(*b*) whether any of the Council Secretaries have submitted their resignation ; and whether the resignations have been accepted ;

(*c*) whether any of them still continue to draw pay ;

(*d*) whether it is a fact that one of them, though not re-elected to the Council, has drawn pay ; and, if so, until what date ;

(*e*) what is the amount of salary that has been drawn by each of the Council Secretaries between 1st April to August 1923 and after the dissolution of the Council in September 1923 ; and

(*f*) whether the appointment of the Council Secretaries made by His Excellency the Governor under section 52 of the Act was intended to continue beyond the period of the last Council ?

A.—(*a*) *to* (*d*) The three Council Secretaries continued in office till the 1st December 1923, on which date they resigned and their resignations were accepted. No appointments have been made after 1st December 1923, and so no one has drawn pay from that date.

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(*e*) The three Council Secretaries drew pay till 1st December 1923 at the rate of Rs. 500 per mensem each.

(*f*) Yes.

Religious disputes.

Committee to settle certain differences between Hindus and Mussalmans.

284 *Q.*—Mr. Yahya Ali Sahib: Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Committee appointed for settlement of disputes between Hindus and Muhammadans under G.O. No. 887, Home (Judicial), dated 30th March 1920, has submitted any report;

(*b*) the number of meetings held by the Committee and the total amount spent by the Government for the said Committee;

(*c*) whether it is a fact that owing to the pre-occupations of the President, Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar, further meetings of the Committee could not be convened and hence their labours could not be completed; and

(*d*) if so, whether the Government will be pleased to appoint a fresh Committee to complete the work started by the aforesaid Committee?

A.—(*a*) No.

(*b*) So far as the Government are aware, the Committee held two meetings in 1920 and one in January 1921 under the presidency of Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar. The Government are not aware of the exact expenditure incurred on this account, but as the Committee do not appear to have toured and only to have held three meetings, it must have been inconsiderable.

(*c*) Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar resigned his position as President of the Committee in May 1921 owing to his frequent and prolonged absence from Madras in connexion with the sessions of the Legislative Assembly. Sir Ahmad Tambi Marakkayar was appointed to succeed him at the end of 1921, but as no meetings were held after his appointment, the Government suggested and Sir Ahmad Tambi agreed in July 1923 that the matter might be allowed to drop.

(*d*) In view of the history of the last Committee, which was entirely composed of non-officials, the Government do not think that any useful purpose would be served by appointing a second one.

Mr. Yahya Ali Sahib:—"May I know if the order of appointment of Sir Ahmad Tambi Marakkayar was placed on the Editors' table or communicated to the members of the Committee?"

The hon. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar:—"I really cannot say just now. But I will find out."

Mr. Yahya Ali Sahib:—"Were the members of the Committee consulted before the matter was allowed to drop?"